Moyashimon et le nationalisme agraire
La transition de la politique à la culture pop

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Abstract

Malgré le déclin de la population rurale, le nationalisme agraire a reçu un second souffle vers la fin du XXe siècle au Japon. La rhétorique récente a souligné l'importance de la production d'aliments du patrimoine et de la culture du riz dans le contexte d'un discours plus large axé sur l'importance d'une identité nationale unique. Alors que les politiques éclairées par le discours nationaliste agraire ont atteint la table du dîner, il est difficile de savoir si ce discours centré sur l'agriculture a pénétré dans l'imaginaire populaire de la jeunesse japonaise. En analysant la série de mangas Moyashimon, il est possible de découvrir si le récit et les images adhèrent à la rhétorique du nationalisme agraire contemporain ont pu pénétrer le milieu culturel de la jeunesse contemporaine. La popularité de la série démontre peut-être non seulement un intérêt pour l'histoire elle-même, mais également une sympathie potentielle pour les idées issues du discours nationaliste agraire de la population en général.

Mots-clés: *nationalisme agrien, manga, agriculture, culture populaire.*

Malgré le déclin de la population rurale, le nationalisme agraire a reçu un second souffle vers la fin du XXe siècle au Japon. Alors que le gouvernement japonais passait la majeure partie du milieu du siècle à tenter de diversifier la production agricole, une rhétorique récente a mis l'accent sur l'importance de la production d'aliments du patrimoine et de la culture du riz dans le contexte d'un discours plus large axé sur l'importance d'une identité nationale unique. Des études ont montré que depuis 2000, l'intérêt porté aux produits alimentaires d'origine nationale avait augmenté de près de 10% au Japon, en particulier chez les personnes âgées qui sont les principaux acheteurs d'aliments pour leurs familles. Dans une enquête nationale, un peu moins de 90% des personnes interrogées ont déclaré que leur intérêt accru tenait en partie à l'idée que les produits japonais étaient plus sûrs que les produits importés, la majorité d'entre eux affirmant que les produits alimentaires nationaux étaient simplement de meilleure qualité que les produits cultivés à l'étranger ("Shokuryō" 2012). S'il est clair que le discours nationaliste agraire a atteint les tables des adultes, il est difficile de savoir si ce discours centré sur l'agriculture a pénétré dans l'imaginaire populaire essentiellement urbain de la jeunesse japonaise; par conséquent, une analyse d'un produit médiatique sera utilisée afin

de déterminer si le récit et les images adhèrent à la rhétorique du nationalisme agraire contemporain.

Un certain nombre de séries ayant trait à la vie rurale ou à l'agriculture - qui pourraient toutes être des sources d'information sur le nationalisme agraire - la série de mangas Moyashimon, parue pendant plusieurs années dans les magazines Evening et Morning Two, a finalement été retenue. Cette série était non seulement populaire parmi le lectorat moyen des mangas, plusieurs tankobons (volumes collectés) atteignant la première place du classement des meilleures ventes d'ORICON pendant plusieurs semaines ('Mikumin' 2009), mais elle a également reçu des critiques élogieuses. La popularité de la série démontre non seulement un intérêt pour l'histoire elle-même, mais également une sympathie potentielle pour les idées issues du discours nationaliste agraire de la population en général.

La série se déroule dans les limites d'une prestigieuse université agricole (fictive) située à la périphérie de Tokyo. Au début du manga, Sawaki Tadayasu et Kei Yuki, respectivement les jeunes héritiers de familles de fermenteurs miso et de brasseurs de saké, s'inscrivent à l'université dans le but de revitaliser leurs industries familiales. Cependant, ils cachent une autre motivation de leur intérêt pour la science agricole: Sawaki a la capacité de voir et de communiquer avec une variété de micro-organismes essentiels à l'agriculture. Cela lui permet de gagner du temps dans diverses situations, d'empêcher ses camarades de dormir de contaminer le campus avec un champignon prolifique et destructeur, mais d'empêcher ses camarades de consommer des bols de curry grouillant de bactéries E. coli ouvertement meurtrières. Son professeur, M. Itsuki Keizō, est au courant de cette capacité et lui-même, ainsi que ses étudiants aux cycles supérieurs, s'efforcent d'explorer les limites de la capacité de Sawaki. Moyashimon chevauche plusieurs genres, allant de la série tranche de vie pour adultes à la fantaisie de science-fiction, et ne déçoit pas son public, malgré son sujet parfois technique.

Premier nationalisme agraire

L'agriculture et la vie rurale occupent depuis longtemps une position centrale dans divers discours nationalistes. Dans le cadre de cet article, le discours nationaliste est un discours ou une rhétorique narrative qui se concentre principalement sur la création et la perpétuation de ce qui est considéré comme une identité culturelle particulière et idiosyncratique, transmise par un rituel quotidien et perçue comme partagée par une population autrement indépendante . Le nationalisme agraire dans le Japon contemporain repose souvent sur la perception selon laquelle la communauté rurale et la production agricole sont proches de la vie quotidienne, non seulement par des choix alimentaires et des repas, mais également par un lien intime avec l'essence de l'esprit national que ces modaux apparemment non modernisés de production et de vie. Cette exposition mondaine à travers la consommation quotidienne est un autre itinéraire du concept de nationalisme banal décrit par Billig. La culture et l'identité alimentaires sont reproduites dans presque tous les repas, les choix et la préparation reflétant les attentes de la société. Ils reflètent également les politiques nationales qui mettent l'accent sur l'idéologie selon laquelle la production agricole nationale est un aspect essentiel de l'identité et de la sécurité nationales, ainsi que de la durabilité économique. Kayama Rika, qui a appelé Petite Nationalism, des reproductions centrées sur les médias, a ensuite défini ce type de réplication quotidienne de la nation comme existant dans les pratiques culturelles douces qui créent l'identité de groupe telles que les équipes sportives nationales. Cependant, même au tout début du discours nationaliste, nombreux étaient ceux qui affirmaient que le cœur et l'âme d'une nation se trouvaient parmi la population rurale plutôt qu'urbaine.

Cette idée que le noyau d'une nation pouvait être atteint par le biais d'une population apparemment peu sophistiquée a amené des personnes telles que les frères Grimm à enregistrer des contes folkloriques et des dialectes censés être préservés de toute influence extérieure. Des auteurs, tels que Lord dans The Singer Of Tales, ont souligné le caractère artificiel de certaines de ces soi-disant histoires et traditions anciennes, mais il reste une perception selon laquelle la communauté rurale est le centre de la nation.

Brass a suggéré que cette notion d'une culture plus pure qui persiste dans les régions moins développées d'un pays a deux causes possibles: l'idée que les communautés rurales ne sont pas contaminées par l'homogénéisation et qu'il s'agit d'un lien tangible avec l'autosuffisance tant sur le territoire que sur les denrées alimentaires (2000, 9-11). Alors que les idées nationalistes se développaient parallèlement à l'industrialisation et à l'urbanisation, les premières rhétoriques témoignaient de l'inquiétude face à la perte potentielle d'une vision du monde unique (9). Cela n'est pas sans rappeler les préoccupations actuelles selon lesquelles la croissance de la communication de masse et d'Internet érodera davantage l'identité nationale. La possession d'un territoire particulier était particulièrement préoccupante au XIXe siècle, car les mouvements nationalistes cherchaient souvent à contrôler une région qui appartenait politiquement à un empire plus vaste. En affirmant un droit héréditaire sur une région, les mouvements nationalistes pourraient légitimer leurs revendications d'autonomie, sur la terre même qui perpétuerait leur population (11). L'occupation des terres est un concept clé, qui peut être vu dans les conflits territoriaux en cours entre le Japon et la Corée. Cela n'indique pas nécessairement que ceux dont les moyens de subsistance dépendaient de l'agriculture partageaient ce sentiment. cependant, ces groupes se sont penchés dans l'histoire vers des mouvements populistes (et souvent nationalistes) (Friedrich 1937, 50-51).

Cette intersection entre la centralité perçue de la terre et de l'agriculture et la perception de la nation et de l'imagination populaire ne signifiait nullement que l'État était redevable aux intérêts de la population rurale lorsqu'il formait sa politique. Le Japon lui-même a une longue et lourde histoire entre l'État et la population agricole.The need for a larger international airport to service a burgeoning postwar Tokyo became greater than the capabilities of the already existing Haneda Airport. Unable to expand this existing structure, authorities began to look elsewhere for the construction of an airport to serve international passenger and freight flights ("Narita" 1975, 252). The postwar Ministry of Transportation had planned and begun constructing several airports without issue and had undertaken a careful selection process to locate a suitable area outside of Tokyo for the construction of a new airport (Aldrich 2016, 75). Initially a site close to the outskirts of Tokyo was considered by planners, but this effort was thwarted when the US Air Force objected to the location as the proposed airspace would potentially intersect with their own reserved airspace of Blue 14 ("Narita" 1975, 252). This meant that the eventual airport would have to be built well outside of metropolitan Tokyo in the more rural regions in the surrounding prefectures.

The second potential site was within what was considered to be a reasonable travelling distance outside of Tokyo, but still distant enough that the Blue 14 airspace would pose no possible conflict. This close location meant that Tokyoites would have as easy access to the proposed airport as they would theoretically have at Haneda or the first proposed site. However, this site was rejected when officials discovered that the nearly 2,000 landowners who held the deeds to the proposed site refused to sell. The vast majority were fulltime farmers running family-based farms, some that had been operating for generations. The soil itself was particularly fertile, and landowners were skeptical that

they would be able to find equal substitutes if they sold their plots ("Narita" 1975, 252). With these two disappointments, the proponents of the new airport found that they were losing momentum while the need for the airport became ever more pressing. They swiftly moved onto the third site: a location in Chiba prefecture that is the now Narita Airport.

Initially this third site was considered a poor choice due to its distance from the capital and the lack of good transportation infrastructure to the region, and it had been determined to be unsuitable. An inaccessible airport for the political and economic capital of a major power would be just as detrimental as one that was too small; this issue was compounded by the expense needed to construct the airport itself. However, with the more ideal locations now stricken from the list of potential construction sites, this became the best option. It was also perceived as the easiest, as the local population were strong LDP supporters and officials thought that they would readily accept a move if it meant that the current ruling party remained in power. A significant portion of the proposed site was either state-owned or lay under a golf course owned by an amicable seller. Officials believed, with good cause, that this purchase should be seamless (Bowen 1975, 600-601). Instead, howver, this decision signaled a shift of the cultural watersheds, a turn towards popular a skepticism and distrust of the state that can still be seen in modern agricultural nationalist discourse that considers the state as an agent that hinders domestic agriculture's long-term survival and growth.

The first misstep occurred during the process of buying up properties when the officials neglected to consult with both local authorities and members of the local community ("Narita" 1975, 252). This perceived indifference created a sense of alienation and unease with the process that never completely vanished. This divide was the strongest among the community of full-time farmers in the region who eventually refused to sell their properties. Part-time farmers and non-farming landholders—who owned around 80% of the non-state owned properties—were largely willing to sell their properties and eventually did so (Bowen 1975, 600-601). The remaining 20% consisted primarily of full-time farmers. They averaged around five acres each, which could support a family business. Additionally, many of these full-time farmers had not long prior joined a sericulture co-operative. Even selling their land at market rate would thereby not necessarily compensate them for their lost investments (Bowen 1975, 601).

Their resistance to the construction of the airport was compounded in February of 1968 when they met with members of the New Left under the aegis of the Anti-Airport League ("Narita" 1975, 253). The anti-war movement in Japan had created a body of experienced protestors who were seeking an additional outlet for their political efforts against the perceived overreach of the state—the perception that farmland was being ripped away from small landholders was one that resonated with student protest groups (Aldrich 2016, 75). This perception was compounded by the seeming lack of transparency on the part of the Ministry of Transportation (Aldrich 2016, 79). Even potential acts of goodwill on the part of the state, such as the promise that those who voluntarily surrendered their holdings would receive a larger tract in recompense, was dimly viewed by the umbrella protest group Sanrizuka Shibayama Rengō Kūkō Hantai Dōmei (hereafter Hantai Dōmei) who claimed that the threat of eminent domain tainted any conciliatory offers (Aldrich 2016, 79-80). In 1966, Hantai Dōmeiissued a statement that summed up the nature of their position that begins with the words: "to forcibly deprive us farmers of our land permeated with our seat and blood; to destroy our agriculture..." (Apter and Sawa 1986, 82-84). Hantai Dōmeiposited that the creation of the

airport was tantamount to the destruction of their way of life in order to add greater convenience to a distant, urban population.

While the eventual construction is self-evident to contemporary readers, the airport was only finally opened after many years of protest and delays which eventually culminated in one of the largest riots in Postwar Japan and several deaths (Bowen 1975, 598). Ultimately, it was the delayed opening of a section of Narita Airport that halted the momentum of the Hantai Dōmei protest group, although this group continued to resist further land acquisition and construction for decades (Low et al 1999, 170-171). Even the 2002 opening of a new runway met with complications stemming from opposition in the local community (VOA 2009). This means that while state policy and discourse in the last two decades have been favourable to the domestic agricultural industry, it is not perceived as such in public discourse. Often, the decline of the agricultural industry and its declining population are tacitly laid at the feet of import-minded state officials.

Bien que les exemples européens fassent l'objet de discussions plus courantes, le Japon n'est pas étranger au tirage au sort de la communauté rurale comme pierre de touche de l'identité nationale. Les premières versions du nationalisme linguistique, fondées sur la conviction qu'il existe une forme idéale de la langue japonaise, existaient au Japon dès la vie d'Ueda Akinari, engagé dans des discussions liées au mouvement Kokugaku, en plus de son travail littéraire plus largement connu. œuvres (Najita & Scheiner (ed.) 1978, 63-64). Alors que ce mouvement se tournait vers le passé imaginaire lointain et moins sinistré, les érudits plus récents, plus profondément touchés par le discours nationaliste au niveau international, se sont davantage tournés vers la campagne. Des auteurs tels que Yanagita Kunio - qui est largement connu pour son travail The Legends of Tono - ont exploré la culture et les pratiques de ceux qui vivent dans les régions plus rurales du Japon. Même le nationaliste d'avant-guerre Kita Ikki a tiré une certaine crédibilité du fait de sa jeunesse dans l'extrême nord de Honshu. Cette idée d'une nation japonaise plus pure se reflétait dans des travaux anthropologiques tels que celui de Miyamoto Tsuneichi1 publié en 1984, qui rassemblait les souvenirs de fermiers ruraux âgés. particulièrement la culture du riz) occupe une place centrale dans cette rhétorique.

L'intersection du nationalisme agraire et banal

Agrarian nationalism is most easily observed when it is expressed as an aspect of official policy on the part of the state. Typically the rhetoric concerning national policy and law is specific to a particular situation and context, and will thereby explicitly rely on nationalistic sentiments for justification. However, as Takeda has noted, policy and social practice can reflect aspects of banal nationalism (2008, 9). As defined by Billig, banal nationalism is the embodiment of nationalist sentiment in unassuming aspects of everyday life (1995, 6-7). Food, in both production and consumption, is so integral to daily life that it can became nearly invisible. Individuals may not routinely reflect on their selection of food, its preparation, and enculturated ritual practices, but this does not make food immune to nationalist discussion.

Within Japan there is a long practice of utilising food as a means of tangibly defining specific goals in the formation of the modern nation. During the Meiji Period, foodstuffs such as bread were introduced into the population as a means of breaking with the past in order more fully to establish an industrialised economy in the popular mind. Conscripted soldiers were served bread and instructed that it possessed superior nutritional quality to rice. Once they were demobilised these former soldiers were expected to bring the new food practices home with them. Nearly a century later, during the postwar period, school

children were routinely served milk along with their school lunches with the hope that nutritional addition to their diet would improve health on a national level (Takeda 2008, 10-11). This change which could be easily described as an invasion into an individual's life was justified as a necessary sacrifice on the behalf of the whole nation.

However, the state focus on the manipulation of food consumption has shifted over the last thirty years in Japan. Rather than introduction of foods of European origin into Japan which affected everything from school lunches, food in state canteens, and import policies, the government has instead focused on a policy of reorienting the discussion about the national diet to foods considered to be part of the 'traditional' and 'every-day' Japanese diet as soft-cultural nationalism. This does not mean that this tradition is not constructed in some way. Historically, rice as an everyday staple was limited to a small portion of the population and meat-based dishes were rare. Additionally, popular dishes such as sukiyaki, curry rice, and tempura are adaptations of foreign foods that have been naturalised over the course of many years (Takeda 2008, 12). The potential reasons for this transition from a perceived Western diet to that of a native regime are many, but some lie in the recent developments concerning nationalistic sentiment towards agriculture and food.

During the 1980s, nationalist rhetoric was sympathetic towards the argument that placed Japanese business practices and economic policy in the forefront of cultural pride. However, with the troubles surrounding economic decline in the 1990s, these became increasingly unpopular topics (Surak 2012, 209-210). Nationalist discourse instead moved to more acceptable aspects of society, particularly those that appeared to be less aggressive. Cultural critic Kayama Rika, in her 2004 work Puchi nashonarizumu shoukougun, noted that Japanese youth in particular were likely to demonstrate a belief in national identity through soft culture (5-54). One of these outlets of nationalistic sentiment has coalesced around food. For example, the author Fujiwara Masahiko's 2006 work Kokka no Hinkaku2 rhapsodised over food grown and served in Japan; it sold over two million copies (Takeda 2008, 7). Certain dishes, particularly those centred around rice, have been placed as the core of national identity, strengthening the image of the national identity in the individual mind while also altering the physical body of its members (6-7). Nationalism in Japan during the postwar period is often perceived as problematic, but by centering the sentiment on something as innocuous as food it can be neutralised as a potential threat while remaining a secure foundation for identity.

One of the outgrowths of the focus on a traditional diet in state policy and routine life is the promotion of Shokuiku, a national campaign to promote a constructed tradition of a particular diet focused on rice dishes and domestically produced agriculture. The diet is described as a means of mitigating the harm Westernised eating habits are alleged to have caused, and it is geared towards installing practices among families in order to influence the palate of children (Mah 2010, 406-407).3 While this diet is described as possessing a genealogy that can be traced into the deep past, it has been revised in order to provide a nutritional balance thought to be healthy in modern medicine (405). The centrality of agrarian nationalism cannot only be seen in the promotion of Shokuiku, but also in municipally sponsored lessons of the tea ceremony, which has been used symbolically to embody aspects considered unique to the nation (Iida 2002, 158-160). This reasoning is also one of the motivating factors behind resistance to the banning of whaling in Japan, as whale meat was incorporated as a vital part of postwar school lunches. The importance of agriculture can be seen in both practices as domestically produced agriculture is viewed not only as more authentic, but superior to food stuffs grown abroad.

Additionally, both aim at revitalising aspects of food culture that are portrayed as having been abandoned by larger, homogenising international pressures.

Agrarian Nationalism, Food, and Banal Nationalism

By the end of the 1980s, despite a number of policies intended to diversify the agricultural industry in Japan, a large portion of farmers remained part-timers and were paid four times the international market rate for rice in contrast to receiving three times the market rate in wheat (Riethmuller & Roe 1986, 330). Many scholars and analysts have suggested that this situation was the result of the constant concern over food security in Japan. Less than half of the food consumed in Japan is produced domestically, and since the early part of the twentieth century authorities have been sensitive to the risks this may cause (Takeda 2008, 13). This concern has been further augmented by instances where the global food market has produced unsafe wares; for example, the use of hazardous pesticides in south Asian countries, or contaminated meat originating from the United States (Mah 2010, 402). Japanese food is considered to be safer. This is partially due to the discourse on the purity of Japanese agricultural products in agrarian nationalist discourse, and it is partially due to faith in the state's ability to regulate the industry (Takeda 2008, 21-23).

The last two decades also marked a shift from official attempts to promote a less rice-based diet and cultivation, to one focused upon grain. The 1980s saw the use of the Foodstuff Control Law to limit rice importation (Calder 1988, 231-232). By 2005 the Shokuiku policy was promulgated by the Japanese state. This is a wide-scale nutritional program designed to maximise the consumption of rice while simultaneously decreasing consumption of imported products like dairy and fruit. This is justified not only as promoting greater security in the food industry, but also encouraging public health as a rice-based diet is thought by the state to be more balanced (Mah 2010, 393-398). The following year saw the implementation of the Chiteki Zaisen Suishin Keikaku policy which was designed to supplement the 2005 policy by teaching an official program of "traditional" Japanese food and cooking in schools all over the country (Takeda 2008, 15-16). This is a reversal of several decades of policy geared towards diversifying agriculture. Rice and domestic agriculture have again taken a central position in the image of the nation. This readjustment of the rhetoric concerning banal and agrarian nationalism has affected how agriculture and food are perceived in mass media, as discussed below.

Newspapers in Japan also frequently run articles on the state of Japanese agriculture, often in gloomy terms calling for greater reforms or protections. The Asahi Shimbun, one of the largest in Japan, was one of several that ran articles in early November 2016 calling for support of Prime Ministers Abe's proposed reforms of the Central Union of Agricultural Cooperatives, which are partially blamed for the decline of Japanese agriculture through its price controls ("全農 2016). The Japan Times also published an interview with the head of Japan Organic Agriculture Association, Yasuda Setsuko, early in 2016 that included rhetoric on the vital importance of protecting Japanese rice agriculture from competitors from the global market and questioned the safety of imported foodstuffs. This high level of press interest also matches polling data, with one poll finding that more that half of the Japanese interviewees would visit farms and rural communities if given the chance ("農漁村).

Beginning in 2015, the Japanese Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ministry also began to designate locations in the country as possessing food or farm practices that would interest both domestic and international tourists. Knight (1996) and Rea (2000) both found that rural communities began to possess a certain cachet for urban dwellers seeking

a connection to a close community (Furusato) as a means of counteracting the atomisation of modern city life. Periodically, this takes the form of otherwise urban residents maintaining small farm plots of their own or volunteering to aid established farming families, particularly among youth interested in organic farming. However, many more are interested in domestically produced agricultural products perceived to be of excellent quality, but as consumers rather than producers. Tokyo is the frequent host of several farmers markets, held year-round with large numbers of attendees. The northern village of Tōwa-chō has also set up a permanent market to sell their village's products directly to Tokyoites (Thompson 2004).

Foodstuffs and agriculture have also been one of the targets of the Cool Japan Initiative by the Japanese government (METI 2014, 3). This program, operated under the auspices of METI, is an attempt by the Japanese state to exert soft power and enhance its public image overseas by exploiting an already established interest in Japanese pop cultural works (Hashimoto 2017, 31). This initiative has garnered the cooperation and support of a number of mass media content creators and producers. One example is producer Akimoto Yasushi, who stated that he joined the Council for the Promotion of Cool Japan due to his belief that media should serve national policy (Fung 2017, 42). However, the Cool Japan Initiative has focused not on media and entertainment, but rather on consumable goods and products. By divorcing goods from their narrative and social milieu, Cool Japan is designed to pull in the broadest possible audience while simultaneously avoiding alienating pre-existing fans (Hashimoto 2017, 32-33). Manga, like Moyashimon, play into this strategy in two ways: promoting consumable goods, and connecting the goods to an amorphous and inoffensive notion of Japan.

Additionally, concerns over food security have been reignited by the potential impact of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). Controversial manga author and rightwing cultural commentator Kobayashi Yoshinori utilised several agrarian nationalist talking points in his anti-TPP work Gōmanizumu sengen SPECIAL han TPP ron. Drawing on perceived historicalinjustices, Kobayashi argues that several aspects of the treaty compromise both the security and long-term survival of Japan as a nation. Kobayashi not only parallels pre-1945 security concerns, such as the arrival of Commodore Perry and Japan being surrounded by aggressive colonist states prior to the Second World War, but also draws on the cultural values of food and an agriculturally focused countryside as a key part of the emotional heart of the nation. He claims that not only are the integrity and safety of consumables damaged by the treaty but that Japanese farmers will be bankrupted by the cheaper, lower quality products produced overseas. This is viewed as particularly tragic, as he places rice as a sacred part of the Japanese nation (see Figure One).

Moyashimon and the Rhetoric of Agrarian Nationalism

As mentioned above, Moyashimon is one example of a much larger genre within manga. During the 1980s there was a burst in the variety of subjects discussed in the medium, which had historically been geared for a broad, and generally young, audience. This genre, which is typed as the food/farm genre for the purposes of this paper, focuses on the production and consumption of domestically produced foodstuffs. The progenitor series for this genre is the long-running Oishinbo, which premiered in 1983 and went on hiatus in 2014. This series sought to familiarise the readership with the diversity of the traditional cuisines of Japan and the creativity that was possible. Within the series, the readers were introduced to a number of techniques and styles that could be replicated at home as well as a comprehensible description of the symbolism and ideology of

traditional cookery that may have otherwise seemed esoteric. Oishinbo also provided the foundation for themes that can be found in the genre as a whole.

WhileOishinbo's initial conflict stemmed from the tense rivalry between the lead character and his overbearing, perfectionist father, this trope is overshadowed in the genre by the sense of camaraderie and interdependence first shown in Oishinbobetween fellow-travelling foodies. Within food/farm manga, community and mutual reliance are a reccurring theme, one that no doubt resonates in a society where the high-density urban lifestyle can result in social atomisation. Oishinbo also began the trope of showing agriculture and traditional foods as something both sophisticated, scientific, and an essential part of the soul of the nation. Later series, such as Natsuko no Sake, which premiered five years after Oishinbo, begin to tie in other ideas commonly seen in agrarian nationalism, such as the concern that Japanese fields have been harmed through the use of imported fertilisers and chemicals (see Figure Two).

Moyashimon was the first of a number of series within the genre that became both popular among critics and readers, sparking a revival of food/farm manga that continues to this day. Series, such as Genmai Sensei no Bento Bako, which began in 2008, and Shokugeki no Soma, which started its run in 2012, two series created by popular manga-ka Arakawa (discussed in greater depth below), as well as several others continue to emphasise the importance of Japanese food culture and domestic agriculture in the identity and spirit of the Japanese nation. The continued demystification of agriculture and traditional cuisine in these series, as well as its sudden resurgence in the 2000s, mirror the changes in agrarian nationalist discourse in Japan. During the 1990s, discourse, particularly that which stemmed from the policies created by state officials who hoped to diversify the agricultural industry in Japan, deemphasised the crops historically grown by farmers and emphasised the importance of large-scale producers who could be competitive in an international marketplace. The shift to both organic farming and small-scale production has shifted this trend, and renewed interest in the food/farm genre as a whole. Moyashimon's success may partially lie, thereby, in its ability to tap into the zeitgeist.

The first collected volume of the series of Moyashimon itself embodies several of the series' underlying themes that forward many of the concepts found in the larger discussion concerning the domestic agricultural industry and environmentally friendly practices in Japan. The obi (the half dust cover placed over almost all books published in Japan that typically includes additional promotional material) touted that the collected edition was printed solely on recycled paper. While most manga magazines in Japan are published on cheap, low-quality recycled paper, historically most tankobon are printed on fresh paper that is considered to be of higher quality material among consumers. Moyashimon, through its use of recycled paper, attempts to demonstrate to its readers that contemporary recycled paper can be of an equivalent quality. Within the series itself there is a strong emphasis placed on the connection to green technology and agriculture in Japan. The survival of domestic farming is linked to the adoption of advanced green technology and more sophisticated farming methods. This perceived connection is not unique in the wider domestic discourse of agrarian nationalism. Within the last two decades there has been a notable rise in both the practice and the media profile of organic farming in Japan. This is portrayed as being particularly undertaken by young, part-time farmers who choose to pursue farming as a means of escaping the confines of contemporary urban life. Depictions of these farmers often use nationalist discourse as a touchstone, depicting this choice as a return to a purer identity close to heart of the nation.

Figure Three below is excerpted from the first volume of Moyashimon where the lead characters marvel at a newly developed tractor that possesses an environmentally friendly engine that is still capable of producing the horsepower of a standard engine. This is placed at the opening of a chapter, and sets a tone that focuses on the importance of sustainable farming practice in a state as narrow and mountainous as Japan. While recycling and other environmentally friendly policies are mandated and enforced by municipal code in Japan, it is how these may affect agricultural practice that is unknown to the majority of urban residents. The image of agriculture and farming in the media, through which most in Japan encounter this industry, is one that is portrayed as more bound by tradition and disconnected from the high-tech present. By incorporating green technology equal or superior to that available to most urban residents into the story it demonstrates an aspect of an industry that for many is essentially invisible. Within Moyashimon, agriculture is moved away from its image as a hallowed, but essentially out-of-date tradition, and into a world as defined by science as any other. This is further embodied by the two lead characters, Tadayasu and Kei. They owe their interest in agriculture and their position as students in the university and students under their mentor Dr. Itsuki to their families' personal influence and to the fact that they are heirs of a sake brewery and miso fermenters. However, by their studies they enter into the realm of cutting-edge agronomic science and research.

Additionally, the use of soy ink is also heavily emphasised within the narrative, although the obi clearly states that the soy ink is sourced from the United States. This tankobon not only touts the importance of green technology in a facet of daily life that many readers may overlook, but the contrast between the series' emphasis on domestic agricultural technology and its use of imported ink underlines an issue repeatedly discussed in the series itself: the need for Japan to remain competitive in a world market where they have a disadvantage in both geography and in the number of farming positions available. Considering the position that soy has in Japanese cuisine, one may consider the obi's emphasis on the importation of the ink to have a chiding tone.

Moyashimon also works to reorient these imported products as something that could be produced domestically with ease. Agrarian nationalist discourse also emphasises the same notion; however this is largely due to the aging industry, the high cost of domestic products, and the lack of arable land. Many in the media and the state view most important foodstuffs and agricultural products as impractical to produce domestically. On the campus within the series, however, scientific and technological know-how lead to clever solutions to limits on production. Students marvel at the exceptionally large daikongrown by average students (Ishikawa 2005, 17). Even foreign cultivation techniques, such as fermenting meat practiced by Inuit populations in Canada, are not only practiced by the faculty and students of the university but also improved upon (29-32). This allows outside practices introduced into Japan to be naturalised into an agrarian nationalistic context.

The characters within Moyashimon embody aspects of the agrarian nationalist discourse in modern Japan. The two lead characters, Tadayasu Sawaki and Kei Yuki, are both the scions of established farming families who enter an agricultural university in Tokyo to modernise their skillset and ensure the long-term survival of their families' business in an increasingly competitive market. While there are elements of the fantastic in this series, as Tadayasu has the ability to perceive and interact with microscopic organisms that affect various types of cultivation, the series is largely founded in the concrete world of agriculture. The manga's true focus is not the extraordinary powers of

the lead character, but informing the readership on the state of farming in Japan and encouraging an interest in agricultural practices from pickling to wet-rice cultivation. By incorporating farming into a typical shōnen manga format, the author Ishikawa creates a world were agriculture is returned to a relevant position in modern life and uncovers the link between cultivation and the table that modern food distribution systems obscure.

Even the character of Dr. Itsuki, the elderly mentor of the characters who guides their exploration into sophisticated agronomic technology and research, embodies the dialectic between traditional Japanese practices and diet with contemporary expertise. He is a proponent of the introduction of new methods of fermentation, and the audience learns this when he enters into the series beginning with his unearthing of a fermented seal carcass in front of a large, gawking audience. Dr. Itsuki brags that although the practice is one that he learned from studying Inuit culture, he has completed the process in half the time through the application of his research methods and the Japanese climate. Another of his students is able to ferment stingray, a traditionally Korean dish, and adapt it to be more palatable to Japanese consumers. His goals and his students' align closely with those forwarded by Meiji University agronomist Shogenji Shin'ichi who also repeatedly touches on concerns that growth hormones and overuse of chemical fertilisers may be having detrimental long terms effects on both the human body and on the land (2014).

His inquiry in developing a wider variety of fermented foods for domestic production is motivated implicitly by his postwar experience and his belief that control over the biome could ensure human survival into the far future. In the late war and early postwar period, Japan experienced severe food shortages and contemporary agrarian nationalist discourse emphasises that the security and sustainability of imported food is unpredictable. Figure Four is an excerpt from a larger speech given by the character on the importance of fermentation and microbe biology in human expansion. His emphasis on the importance of fermentation in particular ties into the nationalist discourse like that found in books such as Sono shokuji de ii no? which claim that fermented foods are not only particularly culturally Japanese, but that they provide extraordinary health benefits as well (Koge 2014, LOC 216). This book, aimed at a general audience, claims that the contemporary Japanese diet and its reliance on imported foodstuffs has weakened the body of the state both physically and metaphorically (LOC 38). The authors claim that a return to traditional Japanese cuisine and production, especially fermented foods and domestically produced rice, would cure a number of urban ills (LOC 183-211).

Even the location of the agricultural university combines aspects of rural and urban lifestyles, and this is clearly portrayed as the university is located in Tokyo but appears to be completely village-like within its campus (Ishikawa 2005, 15). This places the countryside, its lifestyle, and its practices directly within the cultural and economic heart of Japan. Additionally, the rhetoric of the characters placed in the university and their families all regularly refer to the importance of agriculture in Japanese culture and for the security of nation. This refers to notions, such as those proposed by cultural critic Fujiwara Masahiko, which posit that the very image of the Japanese countryside itself is reason enough to preserve the agricultural industry in Japan, even at high cost. Near the end of Fujiwara's book on the state of agriculture in Japan he cites the image of the village as an emotional and cultural core of the nation, the origin of the concept of mono no aware, and furthermore that the loss of this village and rural type of lifestyle would signal the end of this type of mentality (Fujiwara 2005, LOC 1441). Moyashimon, as well as other series in the food/farm genre, focus on the diversity of domestic agricultural production

and preparation. This diversity counter-intuitively emphasises the unity of the nation, as the same core values lay behind each practice. Moyashimon even domesticates foreign cuisines as something that can be incorporated into the domestic food mentality.

Both Fujiwara and Shogenji also note that there are other dangers in the importation of food from abroad. Shogenji casts doubt on a 2010 treaty between China and Japan that was intended on increasing agricultural trade between the two states by ensuring the safety of Chinese exports and creating favourable conditions for Japanese products in the Chinese market. Shogenji states that after the 2008 insecticide contamination of imported gyoza, international monitoring of Chinese products could not be readily assured, nor could Japanese products truly compete with Chinese products in the market (Shogenji 2014, LOC 1986-1991). Yoshihisa, in his book on Japanese agriculture, notes that even food from seemingly safe sources (such as the United States) relies on growth hormones and antibiotic use, the ultimate effects of which on the human body are unknown (Yoshihisa 2012, LOC 659). Moyashimon addresses these concerns by reorienting traditionally imported products into domestic production. The students produce traditionally Inuit and Korean fermented dishes with ease, and they note domestically developed items such as yoghurt cultures or Chinese traditional medicines which can be produced cheaply, safely, and with good quality. The campus itself is shown to be self-sufficient despite its small size; this is largely due to the efforts and creativity of the student body.

Food security is also a reccurring concern in the series, as it is in agrarian nationalist discourse. The first antagonist is Hiochikin, a microbe that disrupts sake fermentation and requires strict decontamination. The two lead characters' recount that they were traumatised as children by a Hiochikin outbreak at their family-run brewery that resulted in the suicide of the brew-master (see Figure Five). When they arrive on campus they are horrified to discover that inexperienced students have embezzled university resources and begun to brew sake in primitive conditions on campus; this resulted in an outbreak of the microbe. Later, Tadayasu averts disaster when he prevents fellow students from consuming improperly cooked curry at the school festival after being threatened by E. coli microbes swimming in his bowl (see Figure Six). The constant threat of contamination due to inexperience and incompetence is a reccurring motif in the series. While the series rarely looks outside the campus, the notion of unsecured food as a potential threat is one rooted within the common agrarian nationalist discourse. The suggestion made by those promoting agrarian nationalism as a solution to food insecurity is repeated in a number of food/farm manga. While the lack of food, a bugaboo of the security-minded, is not an overarching theme in Moyashimon or its fellows, the concern that food itself may be unsafe is.

The location also has a particular resonance among readers who are familiar with the notorious conflict between state authorities, students, and farmers over Narita Airport. Within the manga itself, authorities are looked upon with a skepticism that is not uncommon in most contemporary shōnen manga series, however they remain impotently on the periphery of the text. Dr. Itsuki is once seen in the presence of officious strange men in dark suits and uniform cars which were considered eerie by the characters' depictions, but none of these outsiders are ultimately able to influence the doctor or enter the university campus itself. The few police officers shown in the first chapter of the series are shown to be misguided fools, chasing a missing person who was actually on vacation. Only the students and the farmers with whom they work demonstrate any level of competency and good will. Even the location of the campus which is placed on the

outskirts of Tokyo where authorities initially considered building the airport is notable. The loss of the farmer-student alliance at Narita Airport is symbolically avenged by the campus' conquest of the Tokyo suburbs.

Moyashimon also further attracts reader interest in agriculture by emphasising the potential profits that youth may find in the industry despite long-term employment and economic stagnation. In the opening chapter the lead characters Tadayasu and Kei have a conversation that states that with the proper education, any young person could find lucrative employment. This is in contrast to the experience that many young readers of the series are facing. Students in the series also make pocket money by creating their own cultures of rare fungi used in traditional medicine that is normally imported at great expense. Students also produce the food that they use in their meals, presumably freeing up income for more pleasurable pursuits. This rosy picture is one that counters the common perception of agriculture as a declining industry in Japan. Yoshihisa claims that this image is a construct created by a pessimistic media outlook and poorly constructed national policies. In his book he claims that talented and interested youth are discouraged from making farming their careers by shortsighted practices (2012, LOC 490). With a change in the discourse, like the rosy picture painted by Moyashimon, he appears to suggest that the continued decline of the industry can be reversed.

However, by focusing on the potential of the agricultural industry, Moyashimon subverts one of the key arguments trotted out by agrarian nationalist commentators: that Japan's rural community is in a fatal decline. Kobayashi, in his anti-TPP manga, draws on this as a hazard of unprotected trade. However, within food/farm focused shōnen manga series this decline is rarely evident. While state officials and commentators have an interest in emphasising the decline of the rural population and the economic struggles of the domestic agricultural industry, this is not the image sought by the majority of manga-ka who wish to inspire interest in the subject with their young readers. Moyashimon emphasises the growth potential of the industry, with the characters discussing the ease of finding work as a youth in a greying industry. However, the works of Arakawa Hiromu provide more salient examples of this seemingly subversive trope in manga.

Arakawa's family are Hokkaido based farmers who partially specialise in dairy production. She discusses her experiences working at her family's farm and the difficult transition from her rural lifestyle to that of urban Tokyo at length in her 2011 work Hyakusho Kazoku. She notes in the first chapter of the work that the quality of the foodstuffs available in Tokyo was much lower than those available in her home community, despite being more expensive. However, her explicit discussion of the emotional benefits of producing crops that are so clearly enjoyed by others and the closeness of the rural community is a theme shared by Moyashimon and other manga in the food/farm genre (see Figure Seven). Hyakusho Kazoku is Arakawa's most autobiographical work; however her later work Gin no Saji matches closely the basic motifs and settings of Moyashimon.

Like Moyashimon, Gin no Saji is set at an agricultural school, although in Arakawa's series it is a specialised prep school located in Hokkaido. Like the university in Moyashimon, the agricultural students are dedicated to becoming specialists in their field and demonstrate a wide breadth of technical knowledge. Agriculture, rather than a staid and unchanging industry and lifestyle, is again shown as dynamic and high-tech. Unlike Moyashimon, Gin no Saji has a lead character that can serve as the point-of-view perspective for readers who are unfamiliar with agriculture. The lead characters

in Moyashimon are both the scions of long-standing sake and miso producers, but the lead in Gin no Saji is a first-generation agricultural student who had burned out of a traditional, elite prep school in Sapporo. This allows her to provide more exposition on the differences between daily life in rural and urban Japan that is glossed over in Moyashimon. But, both series strongly emphasise the emotional reward of this industry, particularly in an era where the tangible outcomes of labour are alienated from the worker.

However, the strongest aspect of agrarian nationalist discourse within Moyashimon can be found in the opening speech given by the president of the university during the school's matriculation ceremony. While the speech is relatively short, the text is superimposed over a map of the campus and takes up two full pages. This is a commonly used tactic by mangaauthors to demonstrate the importance of the content conveyed on the pages on the text as a whole. In this nine sentence long speech there are five references to agriculture as being the core of the community or the state, four references to farming's central position in Japanese history, and three references to concerns over food security in an era of increasing globalisation. Students are exhorted to consider themselves as the vanguard of an industry that protects and provides for the nation as a whole (Ishikawa 2005, 10-11). This places Moyashimon squarely within the rhetoric of agrarian and food-centred nationalism in Japan, but does so in a way that seems normalised.

Unlike previous manga in the food/farm genre, Moyashimon also aided in the commodification and cute-fication of aspects of agriculture that not only draw in younger readers but essentially act as a learning aid. The microbe characterAspergillus oryzae, which is used to ferment soybeans in Japan, has been particularly popular among fans and was used in promotional materials for the live action adaptation of the series. This microbe is closely connected to food cultures produced in Japan, and its friendly and open appearance seems designed to make an otherwise unappealing creature attractive.

The fact that a manga which is both popular and critically acclaimed relies on nationalist discourse as the justification for the character's actions is particularly notable because this reasoning is not ultimately considered to be remarkable by the audience as a whole (and this type of discourse is normalised to a degree; but it is nearly invisible to the reader because it is implicit and not overtly explicit). The students in the series even work throughout the series to create the produce needed to produce a very particular cuisine that consists largely of rice-based dishes, local crops, and saké, which the Shokuikucampaign has worked to revitalise. The nature of the series also feeds into the broader interest of rural Japan and its agricultural products as something to be consumed, rather than to be produced. Readers of Moyashimon, like the readers of Oishinbo before them, are interested in becoming educated connoisseurs in a field, the culinary arts, that is both closely tied to daily life but also seemingly opaque. By consuming domestically produced products, understanding how they are produced and prepared, individuals can discover a tangible connection to the incorporeal concept of the nation. The rhetoric of agrarian nationalism is completely encapsulated by this work of mass media, thus further implying that this discourse has simply become part of the everyday cultural milieu.

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